

*Thacher (L. K.) &
Lester (T. B.)*

KANSAS CITY COLLEGE

OF

Physicians ^{And} Surgeons

SECOND ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT,
March 7th, 1871.

ADDRESS BY

L. K. THACHER, A. M.

President Board of Curators.

VALEDICTORY BY

T. B. LESTER, M. D.

Prof. Principles and Practice of Medicine.

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Correspondence.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 8, 1871.

Maj. L. K. THACHER, Prof. T. B. LESTER :

Gentlemen :—At a meeting of the graduating class of the College of Physicians, held March 7, 1871, the undersigned were appointed a committee to solicit copies of your respective addresses for publication.

E. L. BURDICK, Topeka, Kansas.	} <i>Committee.</i>
JNO. E. WATSON, New Santa Fe, Mo.	
G. W. GABRIEL, Ladore, Kansas.	
S. D. BOWKER, Kansas City, Mo.	

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 10, 1871.

E. L. BURDICK,	} <i>Committee.</i>
JNO. E. WATSON,	
G. W. GABRIEL,	
S. D. BOWKER,	

Gentlemen :—Your note soliciting a copy of my address for publication, is before me. It would be an unworthy affectation in me to deny your request, although I sincerely believe that you overestimate its value. However, your judgment shall prevail, and herewith I hand you the copy desired.

Respectfully,

L. K. THACHER.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 10, 1871.

Drs. E. L. BURDICK, JNO. E. WATSON, and others :

Gentlemen :—A copy of my valedictory is at your disposal as you request. Please accept my renewed assurance of high esteem for yourselves and the class you represent.

Yours truly,

T. B. LESTER.

Address

OF L. K. THACHER, A. M., PRESIDENT.

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS:—Having successfully performed your part, it now becomes both my official and pleasant duty to pass into your hands the credentials of this college; and at the same time, it may not seem immodest in me to add a few words of congratulation; and in doing so I do not forget that we are told that it was the custom of the ancients, never to salute with praise the outward-bound ship with her colors all flying, but only the returning vessel with its torn sails, battered sides, and banners gone, but still having out-riden the storm. This was the practice of antiquity. Modern philosophy teaches that it is as useful and beautiful to give our hearty greeting to the starting as returning pilgrim. So I beg leave to congratulate you; first, upon the selection of this profession, which is to hold empire over your thoughts and energies throughout life. In age and historically, it may rank junior to the law or priesthood, but in so far as it touches the weal or woe, of this groaning world, where life is but a remorseless compromise between existence and death, it is not wild or whimsical to say that it is the superior of them all, unless it be that one which is inspired by the promised diadem beyond the shades of the grave, and which owns Him as Royal, who took His birth from the manger and His disciples from the fishing boat. The voice of the past ages swells the testimony as to the power and influence of the healing art. Every condition of life gives to it the most unfeigned homage. No matter how craven the spirit or disloyal the heart when dealing with other vocations; no matter how tricky the tongue may dare to be on other occasions; no matter how ingeniously we play the masquerade of life, there will surely come a time in the career of every individual when he will stand in undisguised truth before some one of your fraternity. We all remember the wit of the old Roman, who taught his son to embrace three things in his prayers, to wit: that the Lord would keep his purse from the lawyer, his body from the doctor, and his soul from the devil. From the lawyer, with prudent care, he may escape, and from the demon of darkness also through covenant mercy; but from the doctor never. No rank, sex or age can claim immunity—the austere judge and the flip-pant coxcomb, the man with his millions and the man with his shovel, some night or day will summon you to his bedside, and there in that presence you will stand as though you were Fate

itself; the sick man and the sick man's friends smothering all hope till you shall pronounce the victory of life or the agony of death. To the conscientious physician there can be no more wonderful, awful hour in his experience. The proper remedy gives a new lease of life—a mistake is fatal. There can not be imagined words blistering enough to express the execration and vengeance that should ever follow the impostor or medical knave, bold and bad enough, to trifle with human life. How brazen and shameless that man must be who dares to touch the patient's wrist, when the terrified mother is prying into his deceitful face, vainly trying to anticipate the verdict which only too soon she discovers to be hollow mockery.

All that a man hath will he give for his life. Job stood immutable as adamant while his friends and fortunes melted away around him; but cursed the hour of his birth, when scourged with bodily pain. The hour of physical adversity is preëminently the doctor's golden hour. In the fullness of health, in the splendors of success, in the capricious flow of spirits; man may ignore the flimsy title he has to these; but when the clouds of woe collect around him, when the shades and darkness of distress rise up in his path, when the ghastly possibilities of death look him in the face, how pitiful is his melancholy cry for medical help. Then it is that the physician's visible appearance is like an emanation from Heaven letting in a ray of hope or intensifying the dismay.

Cassius' sneer at Cæsar prostrate with the fever and crying like a sick girl, is an episode none can escape. Misfortune comes tearing down our gilded castles of wealth, rudely blasting our ambitious plans, but the intellect, strong and well balanced, marches swiftly on to new creations and broader schemes; but let the finger of disease touch this mortal temple and the intellect becomes like Sampson shorn of his locks, helpless and useless, until you with your healing art shall rebuild. Indeed so dependent has humanity become that all the projects, plans, and campaigns of life, are destined to inglorious failures if the medical profession is not taken in as one of the factors in the problem. Who will take passage on the ocean steamer that has not a physician enrolled among its officers? Who cares to cast his lot with that expedition bound on a voyage of discovery if his health is fated to be uncared for? How monstrous would be the blunder of that General who should organize the campaign and not invoke the presence of his medical staff? The enterprises of the day might stand a burning reproach to the energy and restless adventure of this century, were it not for the kindly hand lent by the medical department—as witness, in St. Louis where that marvelous work is being done, far beneath the waters of the Mississippi; a physician is steadily employed to critically examine each employee before he is sent below, and to discard his opinion would be for the man to commit suicide,

or the work to suspend. Sanitary repudiation is the carnival hour for pestilence, decay and disaster. Away back among the centuries there was a time when man in his rude normal condition needed but little help on his life's journey. His habits were simple, his food was plain, and after many years he laid himself down to sleep along with his ancestors, having fairly exhausted the flame of life, and having lived out his natural days. But this period is not that; years are crowded into the space of a day, and, generations into a year. Great questions "strut their little hour" on the stage of human action and are then elbowed off to give room to still greater ones. As man has risen to a plane of more rational and important life, making intellect the measure of the man instead of physical prowess, in nearly that proportion has he sacrificed the power and tenacity of this mortal edifice to that resplendent power that presides in and over it; and just here is where the medical science moves into its exalted position. With all the inventions of the day; the unparalleled improvements; the nameless traits and customs that distinguish the barbarian from the civilized; there comes up an ill suppressed murmur against this premature physical decay. The peerage of England has not the vitality in itself to supply the waste caused by wanton extravagance and guilty excess, and so from the more vigorous House of Commons men are chosen to keep the roll up to its requisite number. There seems to be a standing antagonism between the luxury of modern living and permanent health or stalwart bodies. The names that are illustrious to-day for wealth or talent, where are they to-morrow? Gone like the comet. The boy cannot replace the father, because he inherits from him only the infirmities which became the out-growth of his station.

The citizen who loves his country and generation, will ask, "how can this profitless condition of things be repaired?" And as naturally as the needle turns to the magnet do we look to your profession to respond. The day of stupid, selfish policy ever narrowing, dwarfing the means and opportunities of justly ambitious men, is ended, and a day of expansion and demand has come. There is a greedy market for all your skill and all your wisdom. The iron-bound theories of the musty past are, and must give way before the irresistible tread of civilization; but it is not new theories that are wanted. Humanity sick cares not for these; the restoration of health, the manly vigor that was the inheritance of the race when it began is gone, and like the wandering tribes of Israel, peering into the darkness for the promised land, so this race is trying to penetrate the uncertain shadows which surround your medical system, firmly trusting to it for the full regeneration of physical health. Nor will it believe that this is a fantastic dream, born in Utopia, never to be fulfilled, for are not your achievements written in blood; held in the sacred recollection of every nation; conspicuous in every war that has occurred, imprinted in

the annals of every hospital in the land; and still more indelibly fixed in the memories of the unwritten heroes? To lower your standard would be to insult the fair memory of Galen and pollute the bright record of your other worthies. You would commit treason to the expectation of your friends; you would be an infidel to the beneficent discoveries of the past; and still further, the triumphant genius that rules this eventful era, will permit no peace to lie at your door until you shall have made nature surrender into your keeping all her healing secrets. It is certainly within the domain of reasonable expectation to hope that the day is not far distant when every human ill shall have its corresponding cure, (old age and accidents out of the question of course). We have a right to trust the perfection of nature to that extent, as to believe that there are no questions which we may ask, which in and of themselves are unanswerable, but in their time and in their order will stand forth and be ranked with the trophies of other days. This problem or that may be handed down like an insoluble mass from generation to generation. The wisdom and science of this day may not be able to wrench from nature's grip the full and satisfactory answer, but the genius and patience of to-morrow may be crowned with success. Inventions ever multiplying render all climes accessible with their local healing stores; and who shall dare to say, in contemplation of what we have a right to anticipate, that medical skill will not soon be able to give an unerring prescription for every physical distress. If the curative powers of the North, East, West or South cannot be brought to the patient, then the patient can be sent to them. This is the broad, delightful field that lies open before you. Success will be your glory—failure will be no fault of the profession.

Again receive congratulations that you are to practice in a land where "no pent up Utica will contract your powers."

As we have no divisions of caste, no hereditary rank, based on an "anchored wealth," so we have no royal road to distinction. Individual worth is the only passport demanded or accepted. In European nations the medical department is regulated and circumscribed by codes, more or less elaborate, but the genius of our institutions points to a policy far broader and more liberal. We believe that under the banner of wide spread education, with the masses cultivated and elevated, the skilled physician will be able to plant the laurel of success over the ashes of the dead empiric and ignorant pretender. No doubt, for a time this will strain our faith, for the sway of the outrageous cheat seems to be as unbroken in medicine as in other affairs. But the disintegration of sham and shoddy is as surely going on as are the silent forces which purify and revolutionize nature at times. Educated skill is the Hercules which is gradually cleaning out this Augean stable. But just here it is well to remember that not all who have their names written on college parchment are jewels indeed. Spurious coin circulates and deceives for a brief

time; but as the fog of the morning yields to the pressure of the sun, so will these pass into the shadows of night when scorched by the sun of actual and severe test.

In this country there is a friendly hearing for all your discoveries, even though they are innovations and the overthrow of other pet theories. Novelties, simply because they are novelties, can not be hooted out of notice, and passed, untried, into the cool shade of retirement. Demonstrate that you have something of utility to man, and cowardly doubts will swiftly disappear. There is not a people on the face of the globe so eager and generous to reward merit or give aid to every experiment that has not a sensual or selfish aim. You may drift from the circle of your birth without the fear of being overshadowed by the dignity of an order or the pernicious barrier of society. This is what makes our land illustrious, and you are extremely fortunate that your professional career is surrounded with such auspicious prospects.

And lastly, I should outrage this farewell ceremony, your patient toil, the fidelity and ability with which these professors have discharged their trust, if I were to omit congratulating this class on being introduced to the public by and through this college. Other classes will succeed you; but you are the first-born of an institution established amid difficulties; on this new soil; the farthest West of any (I believe) and in a city where the golden calf is the idol of nearly every heart. An institution founded by the enthusiasm and restless energy of this faculty who worship at this altar of their adopted mistress; who have surmounted obstacles, ignored personal gains, and spared nothing within their command that this college, in due time, might rank along with older and justly celebrated ones; and hence there will be a two-fold anxiety ever pursuing you; the public eye using you as a lense, will read what manner of skill and wisdom is taught here. Your triumphs and renown will add lustre to the name of the college that graduates you, and your disgrace or defeat will stain and disappoint it. Before you lies the plane of undrifted snow. Your footprints will be easily traced. You can not leave a doubtful record; and as Admiral Nelson at Trafalgar pronounced the undivided sentiment of the British nation, in those imperishable words: "England expects every man to do his duty!" so this medical college, with a keen aspiration for its own success and yours, exults in the firm belief that this class, its first representative, impelled by an all-devouring love for its adopted profession, will vindicate that its hope was not built on any deceitful stability of the present hour, and that your talent and virtues will burn with undimmed splendor, looking forward to that millenium when with one hand on the sacred altar of your profession, and the other on the demon of disease, you can stand and swear by the eternal majesty of past achievements and present triumphs, that the last seal is broken and the dominion of physical cure victorious.

Valedictory Address

OF DR. LESTER.

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS :

The circumstances under which we have assembled, renders this an occasion of more than ordinary interest to you and to us. The scene which to-night surrounds you ; this venerable Board of Curators ; this corps of medical teachers ; this assemblage of ladies and gentlemen ; all these attest the concern and interest which is here felt in this epoch, in your individual histories, and especially in this, the birth-hour of your professional career.

In obedience to the requirements of a long-established usage, and a time-honored custom, and by the appointment of my colleagues, I come before you, gentlemen, to utter the final words of advice and instruction which you will receive as pupils in this institution, which has to-night bestowed upon you its highest honors. I am not to speak of the path which lies behind us, nor of those hours of toil you have spent, nor the conflicts through which you have passed, during the period of your preparation for your doctorate. No : The struggles of your pupilage are over, its battles are fought, its victories won. But it is my duty to point you to that future which stretches out before you, and if may be, to direct you in the way which leads to success, usefulness, happiness and honor—the bright rewards of a well-spent life—and to warn you of the dangers which will beset your journey through life, that you may be better enabled to shun the rocks upon which so many noble barques have foundered.

From this hour forward you occupy new positions in society, bear new relations to the world around you, assume new and weightier responsibilities, with all their concomitant and relevant duties.

While your duties as citizens and students have been faithfully and honorably discharged, yet the profession of medicine, the mantle of whose authority has just been placed upon you, makes additional demands upon you, levies new and heavier contributions upon your time and your energies, and calls upon you for higher and nobler sacrifices in the future. Heretofore your labors have been of a mere personal character in their end and aim, the preparation for your degree, and the qualification for the practical duties of professional life ; but now you are required to make your offerings upon the altar of humanity and science. They both alike have the right to demand, and reason to expect, that, divesting yourselves of all mere selfish considerations, you will devote the best energies of your minds to the

relief of the sufferings of the one and the advancement of the interests of the other. The ties of the social state forbid that you should be stimulated alone by the desire to promote your own individual aggrandizement, to acquire for yourselves the renown of an honored name, but that you should strive to promote the happiness, advance the interest and prosperity of those with whom your lots have been cast in life. And moreover, it should be your earnest desire to contribute something to science, from whose precious treasures you have been permitted to draw so freely, so that you may in some degree discharge to posterity the debt you owe to the Fathers who have gone before you, and who have bequeathed such rich legacies to the literature of the profession; whose labors have saved so much toil to us, and whose revelations have opened up to the inquiring mind such fertile fields of knowledge. In short, gentlemen, you should make it one of the great aims of your lives that the world may be bettered by your having lived in it; and while you are passing down the stream of time you may be instrumental in deepening and widening the channels of truth and knowledge, sending out from them more tributaries on errands of mercy and humanity. The most brilliant intellectual achievement or scientific triumph cannot "fill the measure of the stature" of true manhood, but by the standard of usefulness must all men be measured in this life.

The dazzling laurels won by the victorious warrior do not receive their brilliancy nor their true glory from the din of clashing arms, the fearful strife of battle, the sacrifice of human life, or the seas of blood through which he may have passed to achieve his victory. These horrors of war go far in abatement of the grandeur and sublimity of the sanguinary conflict, and can only shed unsullied lustre upon the memory of the chief who has led the host to battle and to victory, by the triumph of the right and the overthrow of the wrong, and the importance and value of those principles for the establishment of which the contest was waged or defended.

The great end of the physician's life is not alone that by toil and labor he may acquire knowledge and store his mind with the lore of the vast literature of his profession, that he may gild his name while living, and his memory when dead, with the perishing tinsel of popular applause, by the great amount of learning he may have acquired, but in addition to this, he must seek to learn the important lesson how he can best make that knowledge available in the treatment of disease, the alleviation of the miseries and sufferings of his race and the promotion of human happiness.

In order to the faithful and successful discharge of the duties of the noble profession upon which you are about to enter, it will be needful that you bestow much meditation upon the great fundamental truths in medicine, which you have learned, that

you may be better enabled to solve the problems of their adaptation to the accomplishment of the great end in view. It has been well said that:

“Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
Have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge a rude, unprofitable mass,
The materials with which wisdom builds,
Till smoothed and squared, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t’ enrich.”

By meditation upon what you read, as well as what you glean from your clinical observation, you will greatly promote the process of mental digestion and assimilation, whereby your intellectual capacities will be developed.

In addition to the mental invigoration which you will derive from careful and scrutinizing investigation, you will become more familiar with what you learn, so that you will be enabled to render it more readily available at the bedside of your patients. You should not render implicit confidence to the teachings of the highest medical authority, without first requiring what they teach to pass through the crucible of earnest thought, that you may obtain the approbation of your own judgments, that it is founded in truth and sound philosophy. By so doing, you will often save yourselves the misfortune of having fastened upon you the shackles of error. If you will turn to the history of your profession you will see how many ingeniously wrought theories have been advanced and believed, so soon to be trodden under foot in the onward march of the medical sciences, and consigned to the grave which truth has dug for error, how many beautiful and plausible systems have reared their bright and haughty crest to the gaze of an admiring world, to be only toppled in the dust, leaving only here and there a morsel of truth to enrich the field of science. What to-day seems clothed in the attractive garb of philosophy and enthroned with exultation and joy in the temple of medicine, to-morrow may be thrust out, covered with the tattered rags of ignorance and folly.

These reflections should afford no source of discouragement to the young, ambitious and inquiring physician; but rather of gratulation and joy that he has attached himself to a progressive profession, in which there are no shackles for thought, and no despotic hand to stay the car of progress. And in addition to the circumspection with which you should adopt the opinions of other men, you should cultivate a just pride and an ardent desire that in your search for knowledge, you may be able yourselves to contribute some bright ray of truth, which shall bear its part in dispelling the remaining clouds which overshadow the great profession you have chosen.

Nor should the errors of the past in any degree detract from our appreciation of the services, or our veneration for

the memories of our forefathers in medicine. For although they taught much which by the subsequent revelations of science has been found to be false doctrine, yet deprived as they were of the many facilities for investigation, which we at this day enjoy, by their industry, zeal, and talent, they have furnished the great foundation truths upon which succeeding generations built, and will continue to improve the great science of medicine.

It is also worthy of our notice that in the history of medicine, we find many of those whose labors and discoveries shed the largest benefactions upon the human race, were not only denied the encouragement of their fellow-citizens and oftentimes of their brethren in the profession; but were met by the fiercest opposition and the most cruel persecution, while in the act of showering upon mankind some of its richest blessings.

Harvey, whose memory has been rendered immortal by the discovery of the circulation of the blood, after the publication of his treatise upon that subject, was made the object of scorn and ridicule by many of the most learned professors of that age, and suffered the loss of a large share of his practice for daring to promulgate the great truth of the circulation.

Jenner, rendered so justly illustrious by the discovery of vaccination, met with neither sympathy nor favor from his professional brethren; and we are told that "so distasteful did his speculations prove to one of the medical societies of which he was a member, that he was forbidden to indulge in them at their *regular meetings* under the penalty of expulsion." He was charged with attempting to beastialize the human race by the introduction of disease from a lower order of animals. And in addition to the maledictions of the doctors, the anathemas of the pulpit were thundered at him, and his discovery denounced as "diabolical." In no wise discouraged, Jenner pursued his investigations, feeling the proud consciousness that he was right, and lived to see himself recognized and acknowledged, by the whole civilized world, as one of the greatest benefactors of the human race.

But we should not content ourselves with the glories of the past. While we enjoy the benefits of the achievements of our fathers, and contemplate with pride the triumphs of their genius, let us endeavor to keep pace with the present advanced state of the profession, and use our utmost exertion to bequeath as much to posterity as the result of our labor as we have inherited from our ancestors.

Remember, gentlemen, that the profession at this day is making rapid strides in the solution of great problems, in the various departments of medicine. And he who fails to improve his time, and avail himself of the many facilities for the acquisition of knowledge, by closing his eyes to the increasing flood of light being shed by the medical literature of the day, satis-

fied with what he may have already learned, will soon find himself groping in the darkness of doubt and uncertainty. It would be scarcely less criminal in a man to "waste his substance with riotous living" than to remain in want and squalid poverty while precious treasures lay all around him, which may be made his own, only at the price of industry and exertion.

I exhort you, gentlemen, that as you leave your *Alma Mater*, you relax not your industry, to the end that you fall not behind in your profession, but rather that you may assume and maintain a high position in the front rank of those who are doing so much for the advancement of medicine.

It would perhaps be needless for me to impress upon you the importance of the duties you are about to assume in society, and the weighty obligation which rests upon you to discharge them faithfully. No man in whose bosom dwells the soul of honor, will lightly regard the importance of a position in which the comfort, happiness and lives of his fellow-beings are involved. Than this there certainly could be no higher incentive to the utmost exertion; no nobler motives to prompt your manly courage to bring into the field of contest every available weapon, brightly burnished, that you may successfully contend with disease and death, or in the event that you should be unable to avert the final tragedy of life, you may enjoy the happy consciousness of having done your whole duty.

In the character of the physician there are certain traits which should be especially cultivated, and certain rules of conduct which should be carefully studied. You are to be thrown much upon your own resources, and held responsible for the results of your own conduct. Hence you should foster a feeling of self-reliance. Think for yourselves, as you will be compelled to act for yourselves. The great abundance of medical literature afloat in the world will not avail you. You will be called to treat disease in every form, both old and new, which must be promptly, if successfully met, while you may be cut off from every other resource save your own knowledge and skill.

Go, then, to the bedside with your minds well stored with the fundamental doctrines of medicine, with a firm conviction of their truth and correctness, and flinch not from doing that which is needed to be done. Let not your course in the management of a case be turned to the right or the left, either by your own indecision and weakness, or by the still more unmanly surrender of your own judgment to the whims or caprices of patient or friends.

Be not actuated by motives of mere policy. To court the favor of individuals of wealth or influence, of classes or communities, at the expense of the surrender of your individual or professional manhood and independence, is to lower the standard of your own character, and will sooner or later bring upon

you the contempt of those whose favor you had sought to purchase at so dear a price.

The rich, the poor, the learned, the ignorant, the virtuous and the vicious, all in one sense occupy common ground when stricken down by the hand of disease. Disease, like death, is a great leveler, and, as the physician is called in the discharge of his duties, to mingle in every grade of society, and minister to the wants of every condition of mankind, it is his bounden duty to treat disease with as much care and circumspection in the one case as in the other. He whose deportment at the bedside of the affluent or influential is marked with tenderness, attention, and obsequiousness, while he manifests rudeness or indifference, or perhaps turns away with disgust and disdain, at the couch of the suffering poor, most lamentably discovers the fact that he has formed but a limited conception of the grandeur of the profession he has chosen. Moreover he degrades it in the scale to a mere mercenary occupation, strips it of the dignity of its Heaven-born mission, charity, robs his own heart of many a thrill of joy, and drives deeper still into his own soul the envenomed tooth of avarice. No wider and more fertile field is anywhere furnished for the cultivation and practice of benevolence than is found in the profession of medicine, and I charge you, gentlemen, as you value your own happiness and usefulness, not to neglect this portion of your duty. And rest assured that your reward will come: not perhaps by compensation in gold and silver, but in that which is often more precious and valuable to man, the gratitude of the human heart, the richest offering which man can make to fellow-man. The biographer of the celebrated Dr. Rush, thus pays the highest tribute to his heart. "During the whole of his professional life he regularly set apart a portion of his time for attention on the poor. Those persons who in seasons of prosperity employed him as their physician, he never forsook in the hour of adversity, when the hand of penury was heavy on their spirits." Noble example for you, gentlemen.

Young men, fired by the ardor of youthful ambition, are prone to direct their efforts to gain the admiration of the world, by other means than the solid claims of merit. This is an unwise policy, and gives no hope of permanency. Far better will it be found to strive for a high standing for professional attainments among your medical brethren, than among the people alone. The clamor of popular applause of to-day may be turned to bitter imprecations to-morrow, but the approbation of your professional brethren, based upon your merit and proficiency in the science of medicine, will be permanent, if you are only true to yourselves and to them, and use that application which is indispensably necessary to keep pace with the advance of medicine. This, gentlemen, I repeat, is the surest road to permanent success; for it will soon give you a firmer hold upon the

confidence of the people than any vain and ostentatious display of learning, or empirical trickery. Again, gentlemen, your honor, happiness, success and usefulness in life, all call upon you and demand that you erect for yourselves a high standard of moral excellence, and that you guard with scrupulous care your characters from the contaminating inroads of vice and immorality. In addition to the direct damaging effects of vicious habits upon your health and reputation, they lead to the loss of much time and means, which should be studiously applied to the promotion of your intellectual and scientific attainments. It is not only your interest which so imperiously makes this demand upon you, but that of society, to which you owe a solemn and sacred duty, which can only be discharged with credit to yourselves and profit to the community, by the cultivation and exercise of a high sense of moral rectitude and professional honor. It will be in your power by a well spent and upright life to enhance the dignity and elevate the standard of your profession, and to make yourselves a blessing to the community where you may live, while a life spent in licentiousness and wickedness, at once degrades your profession and sheds blight and mildew upon every social channel in which you move.

While the physician has more than ordinary opportunities afforded him for doing good, so he has corresponding and commensurate powers for evil. The intimate relations which he sustains to his patrons and their families, would alone suffice to establish the truth of this proposition. The great adversary of human happiness could not perhaps select a more successful instrumentality wherewith to accomplish his fiendish purpose of moral devastation than the dissolute physician. Nothing can compensate the defects of moral character. The greater his talent, the more transcendent his genius, the more extended his scientific attainments, the more overshadowing and blighting will be his evil influence, and greater his ability to wound to the death everything good and lovely in society.

I repeat it, that without good morals all is lost. In the language of the code of ethics of the American Medical Association, "There is no profession from the members of which greater purity of character and a higher standard of moral excellence are required than the medical, and to attain such eminence is a duty every physician owes, alike to his profession and to his patients." Remember that your professional conduct in the life which sweeps out before you will be but the outcropping of the opinions you entertain, and the theories you embrace, and as you are to be held responsible for the results of that conduct, it behooves you as honest men and conscientious physicians, not to content yourselves with transplanting in your own minds the unchallenged and unexamined opinions of other men, and making them the controlling principles of your lives, without first submitting them to a rigid scrutiny; thereby forti-

fyng yourselves against the indiscriminate appropriation of truth and error.

Again let me caution you against the shallow and baseless popular dogma that he is blameless for the result of his actions who thinks himself right; this I only grant to be true if he has first used every means in his power to learn what is right. The various interpretations of those great truths which underlie the medical sciences constitute what is known as the theories of medicine. All physicians embrace some one of them, or adopt others of their own. These constitute the mainspring of action; give direction to his thoughts, and influence him in every step in practice. How important is it, then, that you should exercise due diligence in the formation of this motive power, which leads you to success on the one hand and disaster on the other, as it may be founded on correct or erroneous principles. Yet how lamentably true is it that men are prone to close their eyes to the evil consequences of their own conduct, if in accordance with some cherished opinion. Hence, they subordinate facts to theory. It has been said: "There is no well attested case on record of any theory having been abandoned because it produced disastrous results. As long as a theory is believed men will ascribe its evil consequences to any other cause except the right one; and a theory which is once established, will always be believed until there is some change of knowledge which shakes its foundation." In the formation of your opinions keep close to the teachings of the inductive system of philosophy, studying closely the facts which arise under your clinical observation; and be not defrauded of their value or significance, because they are in contravention of some preconceived opinion. Such was the teaching and practice of Hippocrates, the father of medicine; and the neglect and disregard of his instruction, has, perhaps, as much as any one cause, retarded the progress of our profession. It was long ago said by one well known to fame: "It is in the old regions of medicine that we find the fountains of that mighty river which for more than two thousand years has fertilized the earth and made man its lord. Had the progress of man not been retarded by that ignorance which is the child and servant of barbaric despotism, an earlier Newton might have enlightened the earth; an earlier Laplace measured the heavens; or a Cuvier disclosed the glories of a past and present creation. The mind of man would have burst its chains, and ages ago formed that holy alliance with knowledge and its first born, liberty, which is now its safeguard and glory. In the writings of Hippocrates we find the germs of the inductive philosophy. A physician showed Bacon the road to immortality." He who by his observation first discovers a fact upon which is based a new born truth in medicine, adds another link to that golden chain which will yet anchor the old ship of medicine in the harbor of eternal truth,

no more to be "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."

It only remains for me, gentlemen, on behalf of the Faculty, to bid you adieu, with the assurance that we will ever feel the liveliest interest in your welfare, and the most profound concern for your future prosperity. Wherever your lots may be cast on earth, we desire you to remember that you will ever have a warm place in the hearts and memories of your former instructors in this institution.

LIST OF GRADUATES.

At a Public Commencement, held at the College of Physicians & Surgeons, March 7th, 1871, the Degree of Doctor of Medicine was conferred by J. K. Thacher, A. M., President of the Board of Curators, upon the following gentlemen:

NAME.	RESIDENCE.	SUBJECT OF THESIS.
S. D. Bowker.....	Kansas City, Mo.....	Inflammation.
E. L. Burdick.....	Topeka, Kansas.....	Upward and backward Luxation of hip joint.
T. J. Conry.....	Kansas City, Mo.....	Typhoid Fever.
R. W. Cornell.....	Kansas.....	"
G. W. Gabriel.....	Ladore, ".....	Acute Dysentery.
H. R. Holman.....	Kansas City, Mo.....	Molecular Motion as concerned in nutrition and tissue changes.
R. F. Smith.....	" ".....	Quinine.
F. A. Tappan.....	" ".....	Coxalgia.
John E. Watson.....	New Santa Fe, Mo....	Eclampsia.

